



# The E-Gobrecht

## Liberty Seated Collectors Club

2017 Volume 13, Issue 5

May 2017 (Whole #148)

### Bill Bugert's first four Register books are now online - gratis use!

In case you have not already heard, it is with great pleasure that I render the first four volumes of my Register series available for gratis use. Volumes I thru IV include details of the mintmarked die marriages of the Liberty Seated half dollar series. They are as follows and downloading links at on the club website at [www.lscweb.org](http://www.lscweb.org).

Bugert, Bill. *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume I, San Francisco Branch Mint*. Gettysburg, PA: Self-published, 2009.

Bugert, Bill. *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume II, Carson City Branch Mint*. Gettysburg, PA: Self-published, 2010.

Bugert, Bill. *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume III, New Orleans Branch Mint 1840-O to 1853-O N.A.* Gettysburg, PA: Self-published, 2011.

Bugert, Bill. *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume IV, New Orleans Branch Mint 1853-O W.A. to 1861-O.* Gettysburg, PA: Self-published, 2013.

For many years, I found that carting my notes, diagrams, and/or these heavy books (Volumes III and IV each weigh over 5 pounds) around shows was impossibly cumbersome. If I ever wanted to increase interest in the Liberty seated half dollar series, this situation would have to be simplified for others. Loading these Registers onto a lightweight computer tablet facilitates easy use and quick research of die marriages at locations away from my home library such as coin shows. I have tested this technique; it works very well and saves frustration and neck and shoulder pain.

The mechanics of using these are simple. Download and save the pdf file onto your desktop, laptop, and/or tablet. Be patient during the download; the files are very large but worth the wait. Open the file with your pdf viewer and use its functions (i.e., search, go-to, zoom-in, etc.) to navigate thru the document.

Subsequent supplements with additional die marriages (one is in the works now) will be made available for your use.

*A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume V, Philadelphia Mint, 1839-1852* is not included in this listing as it is currently for sale.

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The *E-Gobrecht* is an award winning informal electronic publication of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC). The LSCC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the attributions of the Liberty Seated Coin series. The LSCC provides the information contained in this email newsletter from various sources free of charge as a general service to the membership and others with this numismatic interest. You do not have to be a LSCC member to benefit from this newsletter; subscription to the *E-Gobrecht* is available to anyone. All disclaimers are in effect as the completeness and/or accuracy of the information contained herein cannot be completely verified. Contact information is included on the last page.





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When you are all done, hit the Submit Survey button at the bottom of the form.



After submission, you will be asked whether you want to continue the Survey (complete the second form for the other part), or return to the LSCC Home Page.

As with the paper survey form, **the deadline for the survey is June 30**. Thank you for your participation!

## Register now for *"Developing a Passion for Liberty Seated Coinage"* at the ANA Summer Seminar, June 17-22!



This course will feature interactive discussions on many topics, including the history and development of Liberty Seated coinage, evolution of the designs, and grading, including the nuances between series. The core of the class features a **deep dive** into each of the seven series: half dimes, dimes, twenty-cent pieces, quarters, halves, and both Liberty Seated and Trade dollars.

These deep dives entail in-hand inspection of many coins in all grades in all series, and will include in-depth discussions into collecting strategies, key dates, major varieties, attribution, counterfeits, and authentication. Students will have access to both reference materials and sit-down guidance from instructors throughout the course.

The ANA Summer Seminar Course Catalog is online. Seminar details and registration information are available at the ANA website, [www.money.org](http://www.money.org).

Course #28 is a four-day class and sessions go all day. Breaks, meals, and evenings allow for networking and camaraderie with all students and instructors, and provide plenty of time to talk coins with people of all backgrounds and levels of experience, from morning to night.

Class size is limited to 24 students, so if you are interested in attending this class, register soon, as it is filling up!

**Seminar #9: Developing a Passion for Liberty Seated Coinage**

**Instructors:** Gerry Fortin (LSCC President)

John Frost (LSCC Director of Education)

**Guest Lecturer:** Len Augsburg (LSCC Vice President)





## Auction News

### by Craig Eberhart, LSCC #1348

#### The Baltimore Auctions by Stack's Bowers Galleries March 29 - April 4

Three auction catalogs were issued by Stack's Bowers for the Baltimore coin show: the typical or normal catalog entitled "The Shaw and Bettencourt Collections;" "The Blue Moon Collection Part 1;" and Part V of the Pogue Collection."

**The Pogue Collection**, one of the most outstanding collections of early U.S. coinage ever assembled, included 27 Liberty Seated coins in Part V, all of which were graded by PCGS. As with other coins in the Pogue collection these Liberty Seated coins are the finest or among the finest graded by PCGS. Sixteen of the 27 were the "no drapery" or "no stars" design. An 1837 half dime, graded PR66, sold for \$48,175 and an 1837 dime graded PR65 sold for \$28,200. Perhaps the most interesting comparison is between the two 1839 half dollars. Both were graded MS-65. The "no drapery" sold for \$141,000 and the "with drapery" for \$21,150. Based on the current PCGS population reports, the "no drapery" design is slightly rarer in uncirculated condition (33 graded versus 50) and in MS65 and better (3 graded versus 4). Additionally, Randy Wiley and Bill Bugert rated the mint state "no drapery" 1839 as an R-6- and the mint state "with drapery" as an R-5+ in *The Complete Guide to Liberty Seated Half Dollars*. Presuming the population report is reasonably representative for both dates, the large price difference should be attributed to the "no drapery" half dollar being a one-year type coin.

The **Blue Moon Collection** included many of the proof Liberty Seated coins from 1865 to 1891. Nearly complete sets of Gobrecht, Liberty Seated, and Trade dollars were also in this collection. The nine Gobrecht dollars were exceptional with PCGS grades ranging from PR64 to PR65+ and prices from \$70,500 to \$199,750. Virtually all of the Liberty Seated and

Trade dollars were uncirculated or proof coins. Many of the dollars had uneven toning, often wide dark bands, that appeared to be from historical storage. An 1846-O with some marks on the shield and uneven toning on the reverse was graded PCGS AU58 and sold for the low price of \$1,645. A PCGS AU58 1878-CC Trade Dollar sold for \$10,575.

The normal Baltimore Catalog included a nice selection of rarer date Liberty Seated quarters from the **Middleton Collection** all graded by PCGS as follows:

1840-O with drapery large O	VF35	\$3,525
1842-O small date	VG10	\$1,175
1857-S	EF45	\$881
1859-S	EF40	\$3,760
1861-S (not Middleton)	AU58	\$18,800
1861-S	AU55	\$8,225
1867-S	VF30	\$1,292
1870-CC	F15	\$16,450
1871-CC	G4	\$5,875
1871-S	F12	\$1,762
1872-S	G4	\$1,997
1873-CC	Fr2	\$2,350
1875-CC	MS62	\$3,995

#### Heritage Auction - Dallas, TX April 4-6

This auction included an extensive collection of PCGS graded Carson City Liberty Seated coins primarily from the **R. Thayer Sheets Yorktown Collection** as follows:

		<u>Dimes</u>
1872-CC	VF35	\$3,290
1874-CC	VG8	\$8,225

(Continued on page 5)





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			<u>Liberty Seated Dollars</u>		
			1870-CC	AU50	\$4,582
			1870-CC	AU58	\$15,275
1842-O	XF45	\$5,910 small date, not Yorktown	1871-CC	VF35	\$8,518 not Yorktown
			1871-CC	MS61	\$3,6425 not Yorktown
1867	AU55 CAC	\$5,170 not Yorktown	<u>Trade Dollars</u>		
1870-CC	VF20	\$21,150	1878-CC	MS61	\$14,100 NGC not Yorktown
1873-CC	G4	\$4,935 with arrows, of course			
1875-CC	AU58	\$5,875			
<u>Half Dollars</u>			<b>Central States Numismatic Society Heritage Auctions, Chicago April 26-30</b>		
1870-CC	G4	\$1,527	The results of this auction will be included in the next month's <i>Auction News</i> .		
1872-CC	VF35	\$1,292			
1873-CC	XF40	\$2,820 no arrows			
1873-CC	AU50	\$2,173 arrows ANACS not Yorktown			
1874-CC	XF40	\$4,465			
1878-CC	XF45	\$4,154			
1878-CC	F12	\$1,762 not Yorktown			

## LSCC Calendar

May 5-6, 2017. **LSCC Table, Meeting, and Educational Program. Manchester, NH.** New Hampshire Coin Expo, Radisson Hotel center of NH. Joe Casazza, John Frost, and Dennis Fortier will be at the club table. The meeting will be Friday May 5 at 2 PM. Gerry Fortin will give his new presentation "The Many Faces of Liberty Seated Coinage" at the meeting.

May 7, 2017. **LSCC table. Norwich, CT.** Pawcatuck Valley Coin Show, Holiday Inn, Chelsea Rose Room, 10 Laurel Boulevard, Norwich, CT. John Frost hosts.

May 8, 2017. **Educational Program. Bristol, CT.** Dennis Fortier will be speaking at the Bristol CT coin club on Overrated/Underrated Liberty Seated Coins on Monday May 8<sup>th</sup>.

May 18-20, 2017. **LSCC table and Educational Program. Somerset, NJ.** Garden State Numismatic Association Convention, Ukrainian Culture Center, Somerset, NJ. Carl Feldman and John Frost will host.

**LSCC website: [www.lscweb.org](http://www.lscweb.org)**



## Regional News

### by Dennis Fortier, LSCC #2016

#### Joe Casazza Takes the Helm in the Northeast Region

**The Northeast Region now has a Director. Joe Casazza**

has agreed to become the Northeast Regional Director. Welcome to the Team Joe and thank you for accepting the challenge of being a leader in the LSCC.

There are many other parts of the country the club would like to reach. If you are newly retired and looking for a challenge please consider joining the team as Joe has done.

Another Baltimore is in the books. The club had an excellent show. Thirty-eight members and guests attended the club meeting on Friday morning while ten members attended the club dinner the previous night.

The Regional Team signed up three new members and had six members renew for this year. Three club shirts were sold as well.

Three members, Alan Welty, George Fullmer, and John Frost combined to build a marvelous exhibit of Liberty Seated Half Dimes. No less than four 1846 Half Dimes (grading F15 to XF45), a key date in the series, were together in the display. Alan and George headlined the Half Dime display and table staffing on Friday. It was a pleasure to have these knowledgeable numismatists join us at the table.

John Frost presented a talk prepared by Mr. Half Dime Steve Crain at the meeting. This well received presentation tied in the Half Dime display at the club table.

Usually the club table is not staffed on Thursday, however the table was set up early on Thursday and there was steady activity for most of the afternoon. With New Member Chairman Carl Feldman, and new Northeast Regional Director Joe Casazza staffing the table along with John Frost and Dennis Fortier.

John Frost was invited to speak at the Thomas P. Rockwell Memorial Lecture, a very high honor. Past lecturers include Q. David Bowers. John gave a talk

on Three Numismatic Vignettes. John referenced the club several times in these talks. We signed up a new member on the spot, and several flyers were given out as well.

Joe Casazza hosted the club table with Dennis Fortier at Bay State. One new member was signed up and long time member Dick McFadden LSCC# 236 stopped by the table. Thanks to Ed Aleo the show promoter for his long-standing support of the club.

The Central States meeting was hosted by Central Region Director Stephen Petty. It is reported that the meeting was very well attended. LSCC President Gerry Fortin gave his new presentation "The Many Faces of Liberty Seated Coinage" and Club Vice President Len Augsburg demonstrated how to use the Newman Portal to access past issues of the *Gobrecht Journal*.

The month of May will be busy in the Northeast Region. Manchester NH, May 5-6, has Joe Casazza, John Frost, and Dennis Fortier will be at the club table. The meeting will be Friday May 5 at 2 PM. Gerry Fortin will give his new presentation "The Many Faces of Liberty Seated Coinage" at the meeting.

John Frost hosts the club table at Pawcatuck Valley Coin Club's annual coin show May 7<sup>th</sup> in Norwich CT.

Dennis Fortier will be speaking at the Bristol CT coin club on Overrated/Underrated Liberty Seated Coins on Monday May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Garden State Numismatic Association Convention May 18-20, Somerset NJ will have Carl Feldman and John Frost hosting a club table. The educational portion has not been finalized as of this time.

Club membership currently stands at over 625. That is a robust beginning for the year. Several members have signed up for extra years. This strong membership total is a testament to the hard work of the club leadership, the Regional Team, and the club publications that are second to none in the hobby.

At the Baltimore club dinner, a first-time attendee was asked if he ever thought he would go to dinner and talk coins all thru the evening. He smiled and excitedly said, no he never did. Where else can you share your passion for coins than with your fellow club members.



## April 2017 Bay State Coin Show Club Table Images



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## Cracked, Shattered, and Terminal by Benny Haimovitz, LSCC #2494

### 1842 Liberty Seated Half Dollar WB-12 Medium Date, Triple Punched, R-3



Mintage for the Liberty Seated half dollar at the Philadelphia mint in 1842 was 2,012,764. This date and mint combination certainly provides 'something for everyone' ranging from rare to common. The WB-12 die marriage is just one of the numerous possibilities for numismatic enjoyment.

#### Obverse Characteristics.



Starting with a medium size date clearly showing multiple punching which in later die state, includes a

cracked die across the bottom of the date extending out through the rim.



Die cracks begin to appear from both base and rock support to the rim, with the strongest passing between stars 1 and 2 (above left image). Additionally, another significant crack runs from star 7 across Liberty's head through star 8 to the rim (above right image).

#### Reverse Diagnostics:

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In very late die state, the reverse becomes even more impressive with diamond shaped rim cud between A and M of AMERICA (upper image). Multiple die cracks start to develop with most significant along the bottom of HALF DOL. in progression toward a retained cud (image above).

But wait, there is more. A heavy rim break runs into a small cud at the top of the N in UNITED and a much lighter one is visible at the rim above C in



AMERICA (images above).

Die state diagnostics courtesy of Bill Bugert from his "A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollar Varieties, Volume V, The Philadelphia Mint 1839 to 1852.

Images courtesy PCGS TrueView with this example graded PCGS AU53/CAC.

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## The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

### The Liberty Seated Cent



Images at right:  
Judd-157 obverse and  
reverse, ex. Eric P.  
Newman (Heritage  
4/2013, lot 3916)  
[images courtesy  
HA.com]

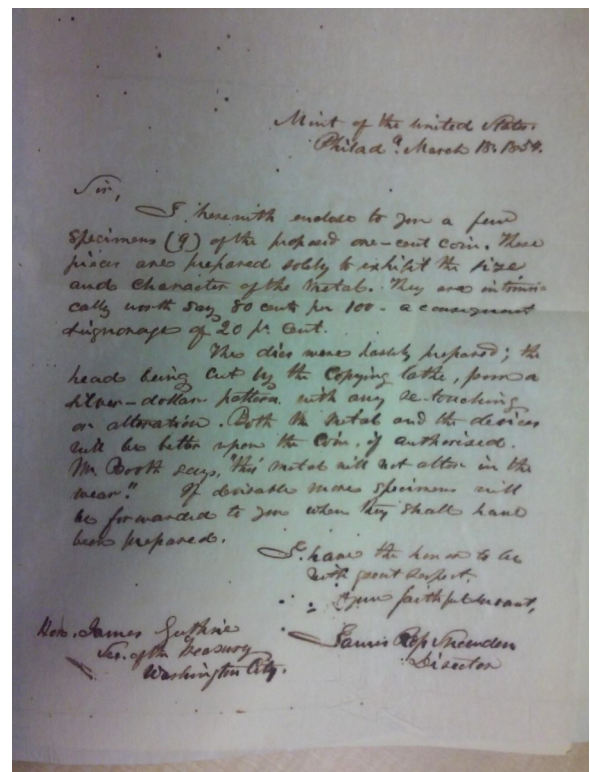
One of the most useful archival resources in the Newman Numismatic Portal are the general correspondence files of the U.S. Mint. R. W. Julian directed the scanning of this series (National Archives record group 104, entry 1), under a grant from the Central States Numismatic Society, and shared the scans (covering the period 1792-1857) with the Newman Portal. Among the tens of thousands of pages in this series is a single sheet containing a letter (depicted at right) from Mint Director James Ross Snowden to James Guthrie, Secretary of the Treasury, dated March 18, 1854, and transcribed as follows:

*I herewith enclose to you a few specimens (9) of the proposed one-cent coin. These pieces are prepared solely to exhibit the size and character of the metal. They are intrinsically worth say 80 cents per 100, @ consequent seignorage of 20 pr. cent.*

*The dies were hastily prepared; the head being cut by copying lathe, from a silver-dollar pattern without any re-touching or alteration. Both the metal and the devices will be better upon the coin if authorized. Mr. Booth [Melter & Refiner] says, "this metal will not alter in the wear." If desirable more specimens will be forwarded to you when they shall have been prepared.*

The coins enclosed were examples of the Judd-

156 to Judd-159 "Liberty Seated" pattern cents, and the obverse of this pattern nicely demonstrates a step



Snowden letter to Guthrie, March 18, 1854, Record Group 104, Entry 1, Box 36.

(Continued on next page)



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in the process of mid-19th century die replication. A reducing lathe traced over a model coin in a circular fashion and imparted the same design onto a working die. The circular lines were normally polished out of the working die, but in this particular case the Mint Director decided to proceed without polishing the obverse die and moved directly to striking examples. The model coin is thought to be an 1854 seated dollar (the crosslet of the 4 is not completely evident) although the Mint Director here makes reference to a “pattern” - but no dollar patterns are known for 1854. The date styles of 1851 and 1854 seated dollars show that the model coin was indeed an 1854 dollar, as the date for 1851 is high and slopes downward, while the 1854 date is more centered in the field between base and rim.

The Secretary of the Treasury must have answered in the affirmative, for on March 21 the Mint Director wrote to James Booth and requested a hundred “perfect examples” of the cent, “accompanied by a report to be submitted to Congress.” As far as we know, these “perfect examples” were never struck, a pity for modern researchers as comparisons of the known specimens with “perfect examples” would be most instructive. All that remains today are the “hastily prepared” examples, along with a few bits of illuminating documentation.

Link to U.S. Mint General Correspondence files on **N e w m a n P o r t a l** :  
<https://nnp.wustl.edu/library/archivedetail/515202>

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## Quarter of the Month by Greg Johnson, LSCC #1460

### A New 1853-O Die Marriage

After more than eight years of working on a die marriage set of 1853-O quarters I felt the project was probably complete, or at least complete enough to publish a die study in *Gobrecht Journal* #118 in November 2013. That article described 11 die marriages and catalogued some identifying characteristics for each. The four years since that article was written has passed without discovery of any additional die marriages; though I have to admit I haven't been looking quite as hard as I was prior to publication. That changed at the March Whitman Baltimore show. I was approached by a collector who had discovered a new die marriage previously unknown to me. He was kind enough to loan me the piece for study – it is pictured below.

The information I accumulated as part of the published die study indicated that the rarest 1853-O

die marriage was Obverse 2 (identified by the die chip in image below) paired with Reverse D (identified by the mintmark location shown below; the die marriage was assigned the J-104 number in the *Gobrecht Journal* article. It was the only one of the 11 catalogued die marriages to include reverse D. The newly discovered die marriage pictured pairs reverse D with a different, possibly unknown, obverse die. The discovery coin grades Fine, too low a grade to conclusively rule out the possibility that it is a previously identified obverse. It is certain, however, that it is not Obverse 2 (the obvious die chip at Liberty's neck is absent) and that the die marriage has not been seen previously. I will catalogue the new die marriage as J-112. For those few, dedicated collectors working on a die marriage set of 1853-O quarters there is now a new, challenging die marriage for which to search. Happy hunting!



1853-O J-112 Obverse (above)

Obverse 2 die chip on Liberty's neck not seen on this coin. Possible new obverse die for J-112. See text.



1853-O J-112 Reverse (above and at right).  
Mintmark close-up.





## Counting the Rouleaus, New Orleans Branch Mint, 1839 by Jim Laughlin, LSCC #876

As mentioned in last month article, the Newman Numismatic Portal had made available digital scans from the National Archives that appeared to be related to Mint Director Patterson's 1839 investigation into the operations of the New Orleans Mint, as was mentioned in his February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1840, annual report to Congress. These were identified by Newman Numismatic Portal as having been scanned under the direction of R. W. Julian, working under a grant from the Central States Numismatic Society. Upon reading through all 345 handwritten pages, it appears this file is not the entire case report, but is limited to the testimony taken down during the depositions held at the New Orleans Mint from June 19 through July 4, 1839. Thomas Slidell, the U. S. Attorney for New Orleans, was appointed Commissioner to conduct this investigation.

The officers of the New Orleans Mint at the time were David Bradford, Superintendent; Edmond Forstall, Treasurer; James Maxwell, Melter and Refiner; Rufus Tyler, Coiner; Dr. William Hort, Assayer. All were deposed, as well as a number of the Mint's machinists and clerks. Additionally, a few bullion depositors and bankers holding unpaid Mint Certificates were called to testify. The depositions are missing some pages, notably most of the Treasurer's testimony, and the first page of the Assayer's testimony had been torn and smeared when wet so as to become unreadable. It is quite possible there are additional pages missing. There was no index, nor was it apparently that it had ever been page numbered from beginning to end.

The 345 pages of depositions are as one would expect, full of conflicting testimonies and failures of a witnesses to recollect. The lack of being privy to a list of written directives or operating procedures current in the Mints in 1838-1839, makes it difficult to summarize exactly what was a violation and what was not. In fact, reading the testimony, one harkens back to a course in Management Development, where it seems every principal taught had been violated by the Mint's Chief Officers and their immediate staff. With the

needs of space, I will just focus on a few pieces of information that came out in the testimony which might be interest to Liberty Seated collectors and give a small sample of what's contained.

In the following, Damien Casas was a depositor who thought he was to get \$200 in small change for a deposit of 200 Mexican, Spanish, Portuguese, and American Dollars. When he had been paid and had taken the coin home and counted it, he believed he had been paid only \$199.50. Apparently following a complaint, there was confusion as the Mint as they believed they owed him \$212 and had paid him \$212. At about the same time, they found that they could not even locate what had happened to Casas bullion deposit within the Mint facility itself, which contributed to the start of the Mint Director's investigation. Out of this, we get a brief glimpse from the testimony how dimes were packaged at the New Orleans Mint in late April, 1839.

Question on behalf of Superintendent Bradford for Mr. Demitry, Clerk in the Treasurer's Department. June 25. (Page 87)

Q. How are dimes put up generally when they are required in payments of small deposits; if in parcels, to what amount?

A. When put up in parcels they are put up in \$5 or \$10 packages. The packages are not marked. They are put up in small packages for the convenience of the office, for small amounts of change. When large amounts are put up in packages, it is done by the Porter in his leisure hours, for which he receives a retribution (a reward) from the depositor. He generally receives 1 percent. A gentleman from Mobile on one occasion gave more. By large amounts I mean \$100 and upwards.

The putting up in packages for large depositors is never done except by special request. It is an arrangement between the depositor and Porter with which the office is not connected.

*(Continued on page 14)*



(Continued from page 13)

I have never known an instance of a fraction in a package of \$10. When a fraction is necessary it is paid in loose change.

The money paid to Casas was counted by the Porter, Mr. Ducain.....

Response by Mr. Ducain, the Porter, to an unrecorded question by Mr. Bradford, the Superintendent; June 25 (page 163)

At the commencement of my examination I stated that I had given \$200. I did so because I felt embarrassed, but on recollecting that I had taken a memorandum I collected myself. I had written 21 packages of \$10 each and \$2 in dimes. The packages were all rouleaus of \$10 each. For a while I was in the habit of making rouleaus of the 5 cent pieces, but lately, that is within a month, I have put them up in packages because the rouleaus took up too much time.....

...On the form of the rouleaus being exhibited, the witness said that he recollects having delivered 21 such and \$2 in dimes to Mr. Demitry who gave them to Casas. Casas put the \$2 in his pocket and the rouleaus in his handkerchief. I heard Casas deposition last night. I am sure that there never was a Rouleau containing \$9.50 and thus marked. All the rouleaus of dimes were put up by me at that time.

Response by Mr. Ducain, the Porter, to an unrecorded question by Mr. Maxwell (the Melter and Refiner). June 25. (Page 164)

There were rouleaus amounting to about \$500 when Casas came in, they were on the table. ....

“Rouleau” is a French word for a small roll. Ducain’s testimony was in English, but he used the term rouleaus when referring to the coin rolls. He testified that he was fluent in French, Spanish, and English. It seems interesting that the Porter at the Mint seems to have held a position in which he could possibly make small amounts of extra money on the side by packaging or rolling coin for depositors. A reference to \$500 in rouleaus were on the table, this would have been about April 20, 1839, when Casas was paid. Both the 70,000 1838-O No Stars half dimes as well as an estimated 121,600 1838-O No Stars dimes were struck in January 1839. I am unsure when the 1839 dated

dies arrived and when they were first used.

Unknown question directed at Mr. Scheide, attendant of the coining presses on behalf of Mr. Bradford, Superintendent. July 4 (Page 333)

Thinks all the work was necessarily done but is of opinion that some of the work might have been deferred and done by degrees after the Mint had got into operation. All the furnaces had to be built, force pumps set, all the work benches made, a great many tools, also a forge built, and a variety of things done that deponent does not recollect. Supposes that these things were finished about the latter part of May, 1838.

Q. Could not the adjustment of the machinery and the necessary changes thereof have been done during the time the matter spoken of in your last answer were under completion?

A. It could have been done if there had been more machinist, but the machinist were kept all the time busy. Has sometimes had a press of work in the coining room when the press would get out of order, and a supply of planchets was thus accumulated. This has not often occurred considering the (application of the machinery. It has occurred frequently in a month. It has sometimes been necessary to take out the dies from their being worn. A die lasts about 10 days or two weeks when there is not a press of work. A good die will generally strike about two hundred thousand pieces, means the dime or half dime dies.

Unknown question directed at Mr. Scheide, attendant of the coining presses, by Mr. Tyler, Coiner. July 4 (Page 334)

The dies now in the dime press have struck more than two hundred thousand pieces. They are in tolerable condition.

Some of Mr. Scheide testimony doesn’t seem to quite make sense and may be due to the clerks taking down the testimony had missed words or phrases. What is of interest is we have a firsthand account that the dime dies now in the press in July 1839 had struck 200,000 strikes and were described to be in “tolerable” condition. Also, that a die will last about 10 days or two weeks in the press, if there is not a lot of work. Additionally, there is some indication that the coinage

(Continued on page 15)





(Continued from page 14)

presses would, “get out of order” occasionally.

The following are excerpts from the testimony of Edward Brown, a machinist that was foreman of the Coining Department, under Mr. Tyler, from December, 1837 to July, 1838. (Page 257)

Q. Was any of the machinery condemned by the coiner?

A. 1<sup>st</sup>, the three coining presses; 2<sup>nd</sup>; the milling press or machine; 3<sup>rd</sup> the Rolls were condemned; 4<sup>th</sup> The steam engine; 5<sup>th</sup> Some of the cutting presses; 6<sup>th</sup> the draw bench, except the jaws, were condemned by Mr. Tyler.

Q. State the reason why the coining presses were condemned and whether the condemnation was reasonable and if otherwise, why not reasonable?

A. Mr. Tyler said to me, what is your interest is mine and what is mine is yours. Mr. Tyler said to me, I wish you to give the men to understand that the machinery is inefficient and will not answer the purpose for which it was intended, but said he, Mr. Tyler, if I can keep Mr. Peel away and make some little alteration to suit my purpose, than I shall shine. His alteration was to strengthen the triangle, by putting 2 pieces in the center and to alter the pivots. A short time after he altered the socket and ball of the joint by making them smaller. These were all the alterations to the half dime press.

He also altered the triangle in the half-dollar press in the same way that he altered the triangle in the half dime press.

The third press was not altered but was put in the machine shop to rust instead of being put up as it ought to have been. The quarter dollar press now in the machine room is as capable of working as either of the other two presses with the exception of the triangle, which is not strong enough to hold the die. A new triangle was brought out from Philadelphia for the purpose of replacing in the room of its original triangle. On trial in Philadelphia, one made of the same pattern was found to be sufficiently strong. I think the above alterations were improper and will eventually prove so. These presses can be used now, but I think they will be found to wear the die more than if they had put in the triangle that was brought out intended to replace the

one in the press. It would have been stiffer and would have held the die fast and prevented its moving. It was much more work to alter the triangle as it is now is, than it would have been to finish the new one. I consider it improper to alter the ball and socket as afterwards, he, Mr. Tyler, was obliged to fix a plan to make it oil itself as it is now fixed, unless altered since I left. Otherwise he would have had to throw it out and adopt it as it was before, as the point of bearing was so much less that it created more friction.

Q. A ball and socket being now exhibited to the witness and the ball appearing to have lost a considerable portion of its surface towards the extremity of the circle where it meets the socket, exhibiting a rough and porous appearance. The witness is asked if he knows whether this ball and socket were among those sent out from Philadelphia, or were prepared here and to what press they belong.

A. I cannot swear whether the ball and socket, or either of them were made here, or sent out from Philadelphia for they can be made so much alike that they cannot be distinguished one from the other. I have no recollection of seeing any crack in the socket on the one sent out from Philadelphia. In the one exhibited there appears to be a crack. The one exhibited appears to be from the half dollar press.

Q. From examination of this ball and socket, state to what cause you would attribute the abrasion of the surface of said ball and the rough and damaged condition which it exhibits.

A. Occasioned by not keeping it properly oiled. It is impossible to tear the surface as it is, if kept properly oiled. The proof of this is by ascertaining how much was coined before it was thus injured. I believe that the injury was done in less than 10 minutes after the first commencement..

The investigation spent a portion of time on whether Mr. Tyler, the Coiner, took excessive time in getting his Department up and running and whether his modifications were necessary or caused more injury to the equipment. Yes, the Coiner did condemn all the machinery delivered to the New Orleans Mint except the jaws of the draw bench. He eventually gets all working once again. Unfortunately, while there are more references to the triangle, none fully describe to a

(Continued on page 16)



(Continued from page 15)

layman what the triangle is other than it apparently held the die steady in the press. The ball and socket modifications that Tyler made were apparently in an attempt to get more oil onto these surfaces, and were described as an attempt of developing a self-oiling operation.

The testimony indicates there were three coinage presses at New Orleans Mint in 1839. The dime/half dime press, the quarter press that was placed into storage, and the half dollar press. I have a later 1847 source, indicates New Orleans had four presses in the coining room, but unfortunately it doesn't name what sizes. Perhaps the 4<sup>th</sup> press was a Dollar press.

Hopefully these brief excerpts give a brief glimpse of the details that are just coming to light, being uncovered by Senior Researchers with the Support of major coin clubs.

For those wanting to know the close, Bradford and Forstall are removed from office. Maxwell and Tyler both die soon after the deposition. Only Dr. Hort, the Assayer, continues in his position.

A reference in the papers of Confederate President Jefferson Davis 1808-1840, indicates that David Bradford, attorney, ex Supt of the New Orleans Mint, was his brother in law (Authors Monroe and McIntosh indicate the relationship was probable).

In a letter to his future wife, Varina Howell, dated March 15, 1844, "I have just returned from the performance of a most painful and melancholy duty. My Brother-in law David Bradford was assassinated day before yesterday. I went out to his late residence yesterday and returned to-day bringing me my sister and her children".

Whig standard (Washington, D. C.) April 3, 1844.

Mr. Bradford had challenged Mr. Mason to fight a duel, which was refused on account of the advanced age of the challenger. Sometime after Bradford came into a billiard room, while M. was engaged in a game, and reading the challenge aloud, denounced Mason as a coward, &c. He then left the room. Mason proceeded to his residence, armed himself with a double barreled shot gun, and came out on the street, where he met with Bradford, and after a few words had passed between them, the latter attempted to draw

a pistol, when the former fired both barrels of his gun, charged with buckshot, and mortally wounded his antagonist. After receiving the wound, Bradford fired his pistol, and wounded Mason, the ball passing through his right arm and bruising his side. Bradford lived but a few minutes after being shot.

#### Sources:

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